UNIVERSAL GOLF TOOL AND METHOD

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. Field of the Invention:

This invention relates to a multi-use golf tool and method and more particularly to a tool that provides a tee insertion device, a ball mark repair tool, a ball marker and other related features into one easy to use implement.

2. Description of the Prior Art:

Over the years, the game of golf has become a popular pastime, involving many different types of people of various skill levels. In order to be successful in playing this game, a golfer must contend with many variables. One such variable is the height of the tee upon which the golf ball is places when teeing off to start play on a golf hole. It is often desirable to control this height and/or repeatedly be able to tee the ball to a consistent height each time the golf ball is teed up. In addition, as a result of the variation in the hardness of the ground into which the tee to be inserted, assistance in inserting the tee is often helpful in assuring consistent and straight insertion of the tee into the ground.

Furthermore, while playing the game of golf, and in particular, when a golf ball is on the putting surface or green, it is not unusual to have to repair ball marks on the putting surface and/or mark the location of one's golf ball while another golf ball is being putted.

Attempts to meet these needs in the prior art generally do not provide enough features or are large, cumbersome and/or complex to use. For example US Pat. No. 6,176,792 teaches a divot repair tool combined with a golf putter. It, however, does not aid in setting a tee and is rather large when taken together with the club to which it is

attached. In addition, to use the divot repair tool it must be separated from the club and once detached may easily be lost.

US Pat. No. 4,951,947 teaches a teeing device comprised of a long shaft with a tubular member attached thereto for receiving the teed ball. The device also includes a ground-piercing member for penetrating hard ground and determining the depth to which the tee may be inserted. The device, however, is large and is essentially an addition club to carry in the golfers bag.

US Pat. No. 3,671,036 teaches a much simpler device for setting a golf tee. However, the length of the device limits the depth to which the device can insert the tee making it difficult to repeatedly use a variety of per-determinable depths. In addition, the design of this device makes it difficult to use in inserting a tee into a hard or frozen surface.

Other prior art devices are shown in US Pat. No. 6,022,280; US Pat. No. 3.761,037 and US Pat. No.6,287, 219.

It is therefore an object of the present invention to provide a golf tool that performs several different useful functions in a single unitary device.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a golf tool that provides various feature including a tee setter, a divot repair tool, a ball marker and the like.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a golf tool that provides a club rest and/or cigar/cigarette rest.

It is another object of the present invention to provide a golf tool that is compact and easy to use so that it may be comfortably carried in the user's pocket.

It is yet another object of the present invention to provide a golf tool that is neat and attractive in appearance and cost efficient to manufacture.

These and other objects of the present invention shall become apparent form the following specification, read in conjunction with the appended claims and attached drawings.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

In accordance with the teaching of the present invention, there is herein described and illustrated a multi use golf tool for use in combination with a typical golf tee. More particularly, the invention describes a tool comprising a piston slideably contained within a housing, the piston defining an axial bore therein and open on one end of said piston. The piston further defines an opening along the entire length thereof said opening connecting with said bore. The diameter and shape of the piston bore and side opening are such that the ball support end of typical golf tee may be received in the bore and maintained therein by the size and shape of the piston bore.

After the tee is inserted the lower end of the housing may be placed on the ground in the location the tee is to be inserted, the piston may then be slid through the housing thereby forcing the pointed end of the golf tee into the earth. The tool may then be pulled to the side, away from the tee (the tee passes out of and through the side opening) leaving the tee imbedded in the ground and at the desired height.

In one embodiment of the present invention, the housing may be provided with a flange at the upper end thereof to allow the tool to be gripped by a user's fingers while the piston is operated by an applied force from the palm of the user's had or some other equivalent means.

In another embodiment of the present invention, the tool may also provide a divot repair tool, a place to store a ball marker, means for maintaining the tee within the golf tool when the tee is not in use and even a club and/or cigar/cigarette rest.

The invention will be appreciated more readily from the following description of the preferred embodiment of the present invention.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the golf tool of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a side view of the golf tool of the present invention;

FIG. 3 is a side view of the golf tool of the presents invention showing an embodiment that includes a piston of changing diameter;

FIG. 4 is a side view of the golf tool of the present invention showing the tool in an open position prior to insertion of the golf tee into the ground;

FIG.5 is a side view of the golf tool of the present invention showing the tool in an closed position after insertion of the golf tee into the ground; and

FIG. 6 is a side view of the golf tool of the present invention showing the tool of the present invention in the stored position.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

With reference to the figures, and more particularly with reference to FIG. 1, a golf tool of the instant invention is shown and generally indicated at 10. Golf tool 10 has a housing 12 with a bore 14 passing along the entire axial length of housing 12 from upper opening 16 to lower opening 18 said bore 14 having wall 20 and further providing an opening 17 along the entire length of housing 12. The housing 12 further defined a

first flange 22 located adjacent to lower opening 18 and a second flange 24 adjacent to upper opening 16.

A piston 26 is also provided including a first end 30, a vertically disposal semi-circular wall 31 and a second open end 32. The semi-circular wall 31 forms a space 33 within the piston 26 with the profile of the ball support end 34 of a typical golf tee 36 such that the golf tee 36 may be inserted into said space 33 and such that the opposite pointed part end 35 of tee 36 extends out of second open end 32 of piston 26.

The exterior diameter of the piston 26 is similar to the diameter of housing bore 14 thereby creating a slight friction fit between the piston 26 and bore walls 20 when the second end 32 of piston 26 is inserted into housing 12. In this way the piston 26 is manually moveable into the upper housing opening 16 and within bore 14.

In order to use the golf tool 10 of the present invention, the ball support end 34 of a typical golf tee 36 is inserted into piston space 33 as described above. The piston 26 is then inserted (open end 32 first) into the upper housing opening 16 until the pointed end 35 of golf tee 36 is parallel with the lower housing end 18. The lower housing flange 18 is then placed on the ground in the location that the user desires to insert the tee 36. The user, while holding the golf tool 10 on the ground (by grasping the upper housing flange 16) slides the piston 26 back into the housing 14 (in direction "A" as shown in FIG. 4) thereby inserting the tee 36 into the ground.

In a still further embodiment of the present invention, the golf tool 10 may be provided with a pivot repair tool 44. This tool, a useful one for most golfers, is preferably pivotally mounted to and flush with piston flange 28 such that when it is

needed it may be rotated out such that the divot repair tool 44 extends away from the golf tool 10 for use and rotated back over the piston flange 28 as depicted in FIG. 5 and 6.

The golf tool 10 of the present invention may also define means for holding a ball marker 50. This is accomplished by providing a hole 46 anywhere on the exterior of tool the diameter of said hole being similar to the diameter of the stem 48 of ball marker 50. Finally, the divot repair tool 44 may define a groove or slot (not shown) to receive a cigar, cigarette or even the shaft of a golf club when the golf tool 10 is placed on the ground and the cigar, cigarette of club shaft rested on said groove.

Finally, the golf tee 36, when not in use may be stored within the golf tool 10, and in accordance with an additional embodiment of the present invention, frictionally engage in a bore 54 provided through the piston flange 28 of a diameter sufficient to receive a portion of the point 35 of golf tee 36.

While various embodiments of the present invention have been described above, it will be recognized by those skilled in the art that modifications of the present invention may be made without departing from the spirit of the present invention. Therefore, the limits of the present invention are to be determined in view of the claims that follow.